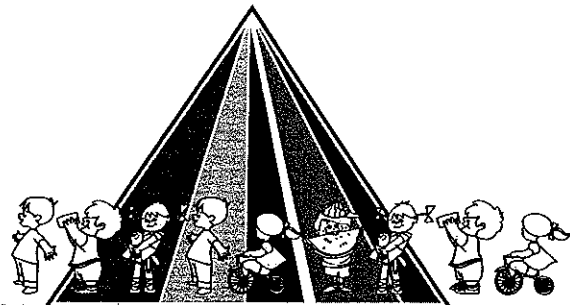


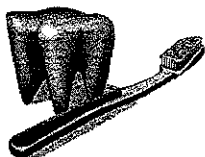
Mealtime Memo

FOR CHILD CARE



No. 6, 2008

Dental Health for Young Children



Teaching children about the importance of caring for their teeth can promote lifelong dental health. Children can learn to select foods and beverages for meals and snacks that promote healthy teeth.

Teach children about the importance of caring for their teeth.

Use the talking points and activities below to teach children about caring for their teeth. Consider inviting a dental hygienist to talk to children about how to care for their teeth.

1. Ask children to name three things that teeth do.

- Teeth are important for speaking. Have children say the word "tooth" to feel their tongues touching their teeth to make the "t" sound. Tell children it would be difficult to sing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" without teeth.
- Teeth are important for eating. Teeth help us to bite foods, such as apples. Teeth also help us to grind food before swallowing.
- Teeth are important for smiling!

2. Do an activity to show how decay spreads through a tooth.

Take an apple and make a one-inch deep hole in it. Put it in a paper bag and set aside. After 2-3 days, remove the apple from the bag and cut through the place where the hole was made. Have the children

look at the effect of decay. Tell them that teeth can also decay when we do not take care of them. We care for our teeth by brushing, flossing, visiting the dentist, and eating foods that are healthy for our teeth.

3. Identify Foods that Promote Healthy Teeth

Tell children that sticky foods and sugary foods promote tooth decay. Ask them to name sticky foods. Raisins, fruit leathers and chews, and candy are some examples. Tell children that brushing their teeth after eating these foods can help their teeth stay healthy.

Foods that Help Keep Teeth Healthy

- Hard boiled eggs
- Cheese
- Plain yogurt
- Raw vegetables
- Meat, fish
- Nuts, peanut butter (without sugar)
- Pretzels, crackers
- Toast

4. Serve Snacks that Promote Healthy Teeth

Help children identify snacks that are healthy for their teeth. Some examples are:

- Apples and milk
- String cheese and crackers
- Peanut butter and pretzels
- Hard boiled egg and carrots



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Bean Dip G-02¹

Canned garbanzo beans	3 ½ cups
Lemon juice	1 ½ tsp
Granulated garlic	1 tsp
Vegetable oil	2 Tbsp
Low-sodium soy sauce	½ tsp
Ground black or white pepper	¼ tsp
Dried parsley	2 Tbsp
Water	¼ cup



Mash or blend all ingredients, either by hand or by using a food processor. Refrigerate until ready to serve. Portion with No. 30 scoop (2 Tbsp).

Number of servings: 25

Serving size: 2 Tbsp provides 1 Tbsp of beans or the equivalent of ¼ oz cooked lean meat.

¹USDA Recipes for Child Care. Available online at www.nfsmi.org.

Snack Menus

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
String cheese Whole grain crackers Water ³	Apple slices Peanut butter ² Water ³	Peach crisp with oat topping Milk Water ³	Bean Dip- G-02 ¹ with whole wheat pita wedges Water ³	Baked apple sprinkled with granola Milk Water ³

¹USDA Recipes for Child Care. Available online at www.nfsmi.org.

²Sunflower seed butter can be substituted for peanut butter.

³Water is suggested as a beverage for all snacks even when other beverages are offered to encourage children to drink water.

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